THE Reconstructionist

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REALITIES AND VALUES

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the Reconstructionist

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EDITORIALS

THE VERDICT OF THE NUREMBERG TRIBUNAL

THE International Tribunal at Nuremberg has brought in its verdict. Nineteen of the leading Nazis who brought war, bloodshed and suffering to the world were found guilty. Three were acquitted. Of the guilty, twelve were sentenced to death by hanging. The remaining seven drew prison sentences, ranging from ten years to life. By the time this is read the death sentences will have been carried out.

World reaction to the Nuremberg verdict is mixed. While everyone agrees that these criminals deserve what they are getting, and, in some instances, an even more severe punishment, there are still those who question the validity of the entire procedure. Senator Taft of Ohio recently expressed misgivings about the justice of the trial. He brought up again the oft-repeated charge that, by applying the *ex post facto* principle, a dangerous precedent has been established. Taft considers the trial a "blot on the American record of justice."

On the other hand, Reverend Philip Tarrington, Archbishop of the Anglican Diocese of Quebec, speaking in Ohio on Sunday, October 6th, disagreed with Senator Taft. "To him," said the Archbishop, "it was a matter of legal ethics. But I fear that a start had to be made sometime, didn't it?" This rejoinder by a high churchman probably expresses the popular sentiment better than Senator Taft's pilpulistic objections. The danger that faulty procedure in international law will carry over into the well-established courts of nations is certainly a very remote one. And the good that is bound to come out of the Nuremberg trial far outweighs the remote possibilities of perversion of justice.

Instead of quibbling over the technicalities of the trial, it would be much better to study the implications of the acquittal of Herr Schacht and Franz Von Papen. These men are being permitted to go scott free. The Tribunal was convinced of the evil that these men had done, but it interpreted its own function so narrowly that these men have been released without any punishment whatsoever. Their service to Hitler was not directly related to the undertaking of aggressive warfare and hence was not punishable. On this basis any massacres, pogroms or extermination programs could be considered outside the jurisdiction of that court, unless it could be shown that these were necessary and inherent to international war. According to

one report quoted by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, a high ranking member of the Allied prosecution said: "On the basis of the Tribunal's decision, any nation today could go out and liquidate its Jews or Mohammedans or Free Masons, or all its left-handed citizens. There isn't a thing that the world could do about it unless there followed the waging of aggressive war. And even so, the prosecution would have to prove that the massacres had a direct connection with the plan to wage this war."

The Tribunal, in other words, went to the greatest extent possible to preserve the doctrine of national sovereignty, to keep intact and sacred the right of any nation's government to do whatever it wishes within the borders of its land. A crime is not a crime against humanity unless it crosses a border. This decision accentuates, as perhaps no single event has done in recent years, the precarious position of any man, woman or child in this world, who is a citizen of a nation. He is completely at the mercy of his government, and if by an unfortunate combination of circumstances that government becomes discriminatory, and persecutes any group to which a man belongs, he can expect no help from the men and women of the rest of the world. He can expect, indeed, no more than the moral condemnation of his persecutors, if that. No international law gives anyone permission to intervene in his behalf. This fact accentuates the vital need for some form of world government in which the men and women of humanity will be able to belong directly to humanity, and be protected by laws that outlaw crimes against humanity.

The trials, however, registered a number of definite steps in the progress of mankind toward a decent world. First, the Tribunal took far more seriously than most of this generation expected the various international pacts outlawing war, such as the Kellogg-Briand Pact. For years this was the butt of ridicule, regarded as fine words without substance. The time finally came, however, when that pact was quoted as a legal base for action against the Nazi criminals.

Second, the Tribunal established the principle of individual responsibility. The defendants had contended that, as heads of state, they should be free from responsibility, and that international law did not apply to individuals. In the official summary of the verdict this contention is answered: "The Tribunal declared that the doctrine of the immunity of heads of state had no application where a state had violated international law. . . . The defense of 'superior orders' has never been recognized as a defense to a crime but is considered in mitigation."

Third, others besides military leaders and statesmen are now regarded as part of any plan to wage war. "Hitler could not make aggressive war by himself. He had to have the cooperation of statesmen, military leaders, diplomats and businessmen . . . that they were assigned to their tasks by a dictator does not absolve them from responsibility for their acts." Thus, total war is now defined not only in the strategic sense of military action, but in the sense of total participation by all elements of the population.

The execution or imprisonment of these criminals will not bring back to life the six million martyred dead of our people; but at least these acts of international justice will serve as another step in the slow but sure evolution from warring families to a united and peaceful mankind. The surviving remnant of the Jewish people must welcome—solemnly,

ɔt joyously—this evidence of the rule law. As a people, our safety and our ɔpes that justice may be done to us rest ɔon the intensification of world-conɪousness, and upon the proper functionɡ of international law. Much remains be done to protect the individual huan being, but the Nuremberg trials may said to offer encouragement with reɾd to the future.

DISSERVICE TO HE ZIONIST CAUSE

ON September 30, there appeared in several of the ɛw York newspapers an advertiseɛnt in the form of "An Open Letter to ɛ Democratic National Committee." ɛe gist of the ad, which was prepared the Greater New York Zionist Actions ɯmittee is contained in its concluding ɛtences: "We do not seek new promises, new planks. The old ones are good ɛugh. What we ask is that our Adɲistration fulfill those old promises now. ask that American policy on Palestine carried out now." Public meetings ɾe been held all over the country deɑed to effect the purpose expressed he ad and to threaten the Democratic ɛty, implicitly if not explicitly, with ɛat at the polls unless the Adminisɪion takes immediate effective action ulfillment of its pre-election pledges.

Ve believe this is both an injustice and ractical mistake, a disservice to the ɲist cause.

Ve say this not because we would with- from the Jewish people the right enɒd by all other groups to protect their interests by the exercise of the sufɾ. We also agree with the authors he ad that the cynical violation of ɪion pledges after election is utterly ɛhensible, and that individuals who are guilty of such misconduct rightly forfeit the confidence of the electorate.

Why then do we resent the ad and the policy for which it stands? Because it would make of Zionism what in reality it is not—a party issue in American life. Indeed, it would make it the only issue of which Jews are asked to take cognizance.

That is unfair to America. The forthcoming elections may prove decisive for many important issues in American life. The economic and social welfare of the American people is involved. Can American Jews conscientiously make the sole criterion of judging candidates, their active support of a Jewish Palestine?

If one major party had definitely supported our aspirations and the other definitely rejected them, we might logically take the position that their respective attitudes toward our just cause is indicative of the spirit in which they would handle American foreign relations generally. We might then legitimately permit their respective attitudes toward Zionism to determine our vote. But there is no difference in the attitude of the two parties to Zionism. Both parties have rendered service to it in Congress by adopting the Zionist resolution. And if they adopted it with tongue in cheek—and we are not convinced that such was the case—both parties must share alike the credit or the blame.

The fact is that American foreign policy has not been made by a Democratic Administration. It has been made —and rightly so—by bi-partisan action. Granted that our government has failed to procure elementary justice for the Jewish people in Palestine and even the admission of the 100,000 Jewish DP's, can we clearly blame the Democratic Party for the failure? Did the British government have nothing to do with it? Did Republicans who helped to negotiate for

the State Department have nothing to do with it? Did the President fail to exert pressure in behalf of our cause, or was the pressure he exerted inadequate to overcome the pressures of British and American imperial interests? All of these relevant questions were thrust aside and we were asked to try to intimidate the Administration into "doing something" in a hurry before the election.

The procedure is obviously unfair. Apologists for it can defend it only on the premise that the end justifies the means, that if it results in rescuing 100,000 hapless Jewish refugees and restoring them to freedom and a wholesome life, the fact that it contributes unjustly to the defeat of the Democratic Party is of minor consequence. But bad means to good ends are justified only if those means are well calculated to achieve their end and if they have no other consequences which may create new evils as great as, or greater than, the evils they seek to remedy.

But the means hinted at in the ad were not well-calculated to effect the desired end. The most that they could be expected to achieve was another letter from President Truman to Prime Minister Attlee, which would be duly acknowledged and filed before election, and—if it so suited the British, ignored after election. What then has been gained? Nothing.

But much has been lost. The moral prestige of the movement has been impaired. Cynical politicians are doubtless laughing at our inept political gestures. Liberal Democrats may be justly offended by our readiness to repudiate loyal friends who supported our cause. Liberal Republicans may fear to espouse our cause, lest, if their efforts on our behalf prove unsuccessful, we Jews may turn against them. And American anti-Zionists have been given a plausible argument in support of their contention that Zionists a not good Americans.

Our leaders should abjure such eth ally dubious political practices. They c only hurt the moral prestige of our mo ment. In the long run, the moral presti of Zionism is its greatest asset.

REVITALIZING SIMHAT TORAH

THIS issue will reach o readers during *Hol H moed of Sukkot,* just a few days befo *Simhat Torah.* If for no other reas than by way of contrast to the hea solemnity of the *Yamim Nara-im, Simh Torah* is a thrice-welcomed guest. It also rapidly becoming a day of renew and refreshed significance.

The development of *Simhat Torah* beginning to parallel that of *Shavu* Both are being rescued by reinterpret tion from becoming a mere nostalg memory—the latter by its appointment the day for Confirmation, the former the tendency of recent years to obser it with Consecration Service for the ve little boys and girls who are entering Jewish school for the first time. Both ce monies were introduced by the Refo wing of Judaism; both have now beco common practice among a great ma Conservative congregations and ev among a few congregations of Orthod persuasion. In many cities and sy gogues *Shavuot* has already become of the major religious occasions of t year. If the popularity of the Con cration Service increases—as we believe should and hope it will—the same m soon be true of *Simhat Torah.*

Here are rich examples of what happen when Judaism retains the dyna ic quality of its ceremonial life. T many of us unthinkingly accept the b of our tradition as finished business, f getting that through the centuries th

as a continual development and evolu-
on of Jewish practice, that many of the
istoms and habits we now enshrine as
cred traditions were once considered
ld experiments. Such experiments are
eeded to keep our faith and civilization
om becoming stagnant. Confirmation
d Consecration are well on the way
ward the status of *minhagim* in modern
wish life. They inject a new freshness
to the old significance of days long hal-
wed but, in recent years, too often neg-
cted by our people.

It needs to be re-emphasized, however,
at a new ceremonial can be even more
eaningless than an old one, if it is al-
wed to be merely a series of empty
otions. Confirmation is a proper observ-
ce of *Shavuot* only if it symbolizes and
maxes a Jewish education of real con-
t and effect. Consecration can add to
significance of *Simhat Torah* only
it marks the beginning of such a Jew-
education. The day is not just a
hah in a vacuum. It is *Simhat*
ORAH! To rejoice in the Torah, one
st obviously, to begin with, have some
derstanding and appreciation of what
rah is. The discovery of a pearl is
se for rejoicing only to the man who
ows its value. To him who is without
h knowledge, a pearl is only an ob-
ction in the eating of an oyster. One
s not rejoice over obstructions.

t will not be enough, therefore, for
gregations merely to establish a Con-
ration Service on *Simhat Torah* and
onfirmation Service on *Shavuot*. What
pens between the two is of even great-
mportance. Like a marriage ceremony,
secration holds great, dramatic prom-
Like the observance of a wedding
iversary, Confirmation is justified only
he promise is fulfilled.

ut if the promise of *Simhat Torah*
be realized fully, more than con-
rational responsibility is involved. Vast
numbers of Jewish parents are regrettably not affiliated with congregations. Some congregations have not matched intention with achievement in the field of Jewish education. For both reasons Jewish education must more and more become a function of the entire community. With individual congregations and schools preserving a full measure of independence and autonomy, there is urgent need for a central community agency to plan, to coordinate, to build curricula, to establish standards, to stimulate achievement. The pattern has already been set in New York, in Chicago, in Cleveland and other cities.

To those of us who are convinced that some form of Jewish community life must emerge out of our present chaos, the growth of community responsibility in Jewish education is an omen of great good. It may well be that our failure thus far to establish Jewish communities has been due to our stress on structure rather than function. Here, in the field of Jewish education, is an excellent place to begin, in a limited sphere, the functional approach to Jewish community life. Through proper development of such specific functions as this, we may yet work our way toward a fuller and richer concept of community.

In that day *Simhat Torah* will be a *Yom Tov* indeed.

REALITIES AND VALUES

THE HAGANAH IN A RECENT "Order of the Day" issued to all its members declared: "The Jewish Resistance movement does not bear any responsibility for the recent activities of the Irgun Zvai Leumi and of the Stern Group. . . . But even now, even in the face of renewed violence, the Haganah will not fulfill the will of the authorities

to open a bloody war between the Jews: Neither the government's provocation nor the licentiousness of the dissenting organizations will divert the Haganah from its fateful struggle against the strangling anti-Zionist policy." The Haganah acts with both courage and prudence. The Palestine government would like nothing better than to provoke civil war between rival wings of the Jewish resistance. But the Haganah will not let itself be caught in that trap. Though it denounces indiscriminate violence on the part of Jews, it will not make itself a party to the tyranny and brutality of the British regime in Palestine. As long as the Haganah keeps to this course, it will command the respect and receive the support of Jewry everywhere. And the Gentile world will also understand and admire.

▼

In spite of curfews, raids, and all sorts of oppressive measures designed to strangle the life of the Yishuv, Jewish constructive effort in Palestine goes on without a halt. The October issue of *Technion,* the organ of the American society that helps support the Haifa Institute of Technology, contains, by way of example, a story about the Palestine Association of Engineers and Architects. Here are some of the Association's activities: 1) It conducts a laboratory for testing materials, with five departments—for testing building, mechanical, electrical physical and chemical materials. 2) It publishes a bi-monthly technical journal in Hebrew and English. 3) It runs a technical library. 4) It provides loans and other financial assistance to its members. 5) It arranges exhibitions.

▼

When the United Nations was still in the making at the San Francisco Conference, many entertained the hope that it would not only formulate but implement a universal charter of human rights. All hopes of the implementation of any such charter in the near future have been shattered by the intransigent nationalism of the participating nations. They cannot bring themselves to the realization that in our age absolute national sovereignty is an anachronism, a fatal anachronism. So in every nation dissident individuals and minority groups will be at the mercy of dominant majorities and without effective international protection. To bring at least moral pressure to the defense of human rights, Trygve Lie, Secretary General of the United Nations, has proposed that each nation be asked to set up a local Commission on Human Rights, which would report to the corresponding commission of the U. N. That might help a little to create a favorable climate of opinion. But the USSR delegate opposed making even such action mandatory.

▼

The United Church of Canada, says a recent release of the Religious News Service, has appointed a commission to "study the origins and development of modern culture; points of tension between culture and the Christian faith today; the problem of relating Christian faith to the customs, habits and modes of thinking of the modern man; the task of transforming culture, including such media as the radio, movies, press, and the printed page to a more Christian pattern, and the role of the Church in the redemption of culture." Substitute the word *Jewish* for *Christian* and *Jewish community* for *Church* in the foregoing quotation, and you have a close approximation to the Reconstructionist program. Among Christians as among Jews, thinking people are beginning to realize that one cannot divorce religion from culture and from the secular aspects of community life without damage to religion itself.

ndoctrination in the Jewish School

By LAWRENCE W. CROHN

IT has become a commonplace that Jewish life can tain vitality only through the dissemin- ion of Jewish education. To be sure, is is no new doctrine; learning is and ways has been a respected ingredient of ır way of life. But in its more formal pect, we in America, scanning our road ead, have fixed our attention upon the assroom as the ultimate test of Jewish gor. The transformation of the old *eder*" into the modern classroom is out completed. Not as much progress n be recorded in respect to Jewish aching personnel, although with the e of Teachers Institutes, considerable ogress has undoubtedly been made. But e advance in this direction has not en sufficient to make up for the great s in talents, now that gifted Jewish icators no longer, as in former times, ive each year from across the water. e Jewish teaching profession remains gely a part-time vocation, and only in e cases do young people evidence in- tions to make Jewish teaching their -time work. Among many reasons for , inadequate compensation, of course, lks high, but in addition, the social us of teaching unfortunately remains in the scale of popular acceptance. s a sad commentary on the vision of people whose very existence will so ely depend on education.

Need for Indoctrination

uch is the background of the problem. ly progressive educators are not un- dful of their weighty task. Many are articles and discussions about the e of Hebrew in the curriculum. Some in Jewish education a means chiefly the development of character-building. From one Jewish educator the demand is made that Jewish education be "America-centered." There is lacking in too many of these programs the conscious aim and purpose to make of our children zealous and devoted Jews. Only the Orthodox group knows where it is going, but its premises are unacceptable to most modern-minded people. An official statement of the Orthodox Yeshiva in Detroit averred that its two basic objectives were "knowledge of the written and oral law and practice of all *mitzvot* as detailed in the *Shulhan Arukh*."

No one will question the desire of Jewish educators to do a good job. There is, it is true, often lacking a deep conviction and a zealous drive to rear believing and convinced Jews. Few thinking Jews ever question the importance of Hebrew, but one suspects often that this preoccupation with the language permits teachers to dismiss from their curriculum the equally pressing problems of Jewish adjustment within the American scene. These other problems are not met head-on.

Hebrew school children are expected to excel in the mechanical reading of Hebrew, so as to follow the services in the synagogues. This is all that many Jews ask of the Jewish educator. At the other extreme are the neo-Hebraists whose aims are secular, though nonetheless deeply Jewish. All will agree that the opportunity to learn something of our Jewish classics is desirable—indeed essential. All hope that somehow good Jews will come out of the school system. One eminent educator stated that the best we can hope for is that the child will react favorably after being subjected to as much as possible of Jewish learning. There is here

no firm point-of-view, no real theory or program; only a sincere hope that once we have given the student a glimpse of Jewish culture, the end result will be good. The whole policy and program of Jewish education seems to this writer to be a hit-and-miss affair.

The success of our educational efforts will determine how we are to survive. Unless we learn how to interpret our heritage to our children, we shall fail in our efforts to keep alive a creative Judaism. We shall not succeed by yielding to timidity or false fears.

Is there a different answer to the problem? Have we accepted educational clichés without thinking them through? Unfortunately, certain pedagogic theories have enslaved our thinking. Conscious indoctrination is viewed as a bogie. It is considered a tool to be used only by the Hitlers and Mussolinis. Upon this rock, Jewish educators make their stand even though Judaism may perish thereby.

They may be all wrong. For what is it that we must strive for in the schoolroom? The Jewish home is largely defunct as a source of Jewish values. Therefore the Hebrew school has the double task of both evoking an emotional response and providing an educational background. We must, from the very beginning, deliberately go about the business of making good Jews. We must indoctrinate by suggestion, by pleasant associations, and above all, by direct teaching. Even secular education in America is no longer completely child-centered. Purposeful teaching, full of democratic indoctrination now appears to be the order of the day.

What Sort of Indoctrination?

Yes, straightforward indoctrination, unashamed, this is the greatest need. Some educators have contended that there is no education without indoctrination. True enough, indoctrination may become a tool of evil people. Shall we, because of this, fail to use the same device for good purposes?

The Jew is perplexed by many things. If he is to be a well-adjusted Jew he will want many questions answered. Children very early begin to have the same questioning outlook. Witness the hundreds of juvenile discussion groups in Sunday schools and the ever recurrent debates on anti-Semitism, inter-marriage, "Are we a nation?" etc. Why not therefore teach from the beginning with the firm purpose in mind of inculcating a sound approach to Jewish life?

Now let us apply this suggestion to the schooling of the Jewish child. The point of view of this writer is the Reconstructionist one, which seems to appeal, in more or less degree to many forward thinking Jewish educators and laymen.

All of us remember our first doubts about the stories in the Bible. From these unresolved doubts has come the attitude of many un-Jewish Jews, even among those with good Jewish background. Belief in miracles seems naive today. Adult-minded Jews view the Bible literature as the peculiar product of Jewish genius, created during an unusual, and inspired period in Jewish history. To explain this to children need not involve us in theories of higher criticism. It is high time we told our children the truth that people believed many things in ancient times that we cannot accept today. And having said so, unequivocally, we can proceed to point out the great religious, ethical, literary and historic appeal of the Bible. If this can be done in Hebrew, so much the better, but this accomplishment must not be sacrificed if the proficiency of the pupils in the Hebrew language is inadequate. It must

en be done in English. In any case, as human document the Bible remains the st of available material for Jewish re- ious teaching, "And God said" ex- esses very primitive ideas. Our forbears re groping — rather brilliantly — for ritual truth. Oh, for teachers to handle s subject! It is time we made a start.

The question will arise: how express ilosophic ideas in language which is derstandable to children? It might rn out to be easier than our present actices of evasion. This writer has nd it so with his own children. As ll might we say that we should con- ue to teach that the sun travels up d down the skies because it is more ficult to impart scientific truth at an ly age. It can be done—the attempt s not been widely made.

What are the Jews?—the ever-recur- g question in Sunday schools! What an portunity to indoctrinate the whole ncept of Judaism as a civilization! xtbooks are needed to teach this view- nt step by step. Extra-curricular ac- ties would likewise be directed into s pattern. Jewish music, art, commun- organization, Palestine, Hebrew speak- —all the materials of Jewish education d to be coordinated in a well thought- plan to make the child feel at home h his people. The aim would include t of having young people accept their vishness as naturally as they do their ericanism.

t is shocking but true that Zionism not taught to our children. It is true course that our Hebrew schools are pathetic to Zionism, teach Zionist gs, display pictures of Herzl and gen- ly impart a warm feeling for Pales- to their students. But as for formal lly, such as the history of Zionism, the graphy of Palestine, the full story present day life in the land—these are not generally included. Indeed, some say that this would smack of partiality. One Sunday school teacher was asked by a student whether he is a Zionist and he answered that the question is similar to asking him whether he is a Democrat or a Republican. The teacher is a Zionist but to such lengths do pedagogues go to avoid direct indoctrination that he would not even affirm his own convictions.

Zionism, aside from its political connotation, is a vibrant story of Jewish rebirth. In this day, when we try so hard to create in our children favorable, positive Jewish reactions, we miss the boat by not teaching all about Palestine in a formal course. And in syngagogue schools and Hebrew schools why avoid the so-called political implication? Why should we hesitate to teach the principles and ideals of Zionism—yes, indoctrinate our children with our Zionism? One would think that Americanism is self-evident and thoroughly understood by all. But the school systems are expending their efforts to teach true Americanism; not by circuitous methods, but by direct teaching—by indoctrinating.

These are some of the subjects which lend themselves to such a direct approach to Jewish education. Even religion, as such, as the central aspect of Jewish civilization will have to be taught, and from the modern viewpoint. Obviously the catechism method will not serve our purpose. This problem is a difficult one, but we will not solve it by evasion. This is a call to Jewish pedagogues for sincere study and experimentation. Soon our children will have to be taught about atomic fission, about the transformation of matter into energy; these will be our every day science before long. Our spiritual rationale will be as far removed from Orthodoxy, as is modern physics from that of Newton. Rabbis! Teachers! This is a challenge to your profession. Speak-

ing for the laity, I urge you to go forward.

Indoctrination and Mental Growth

This article deals with an approach to formal Jewish teaching. Much has been written recently about imparting Judaism in more congenial surroundings. Programs of informal activities involving Jewish experiences in order to yield satisfactory emotional appeal are a new approach to the problem. All this may be very desirable, but of itself, it will not create thinking and understanding Jews. Our people are generally thoughtful and highly critical. It will take strong and well-directed teaching to send our young people into the coming age with logical as well as passionate Jewish personalities.

It is our firm conviction that when we make good Jews, we help to make happy people. If we indoctrinate, we are not attempting to stifle and narrow the mental outlook of the coming generation. We want our young people to think, to understand their past, to be creative, and to explore new paths in their adult careers. Judaism will never be a static way of life. The Babylonian Talmud evolved over a long period. That there is a process of growth in Jewish life is granted by nearly all. But in the future the Jewish world will move along very rapidly. It is for the facing of this "brave new world" that we are asked to develop ways and means of preparing our Jewish children.

The Sephardic Community in America

By JOSEPH M. PAPO

EVER since I began my work with the Central Sephardic Jewish Community of America, many of my Ashkenazic friends, both lay and professional, have been asking me two questions: "Who are the Sephardic Jews?" and "Why are you building up a separate Sephardic community; why cannot the Sephardim be part of the general Jewish community?" In this article I want to answer briefly these two questions.

The Origin of the Sephardic Community

According to the Jewish Encyclopedia the Sephardim are the descendants of the Jews who were expelled from Spain and Portugal and who seettled in southern France, Italy, North Africa, Turkey, Asia Minor, Holland, England and other countries. The Sephardic Jews were the bearers of Jewish culture and maintained a sense of their dignity and status for many centuries. Wherever they settled they grouped themselves according to the country, district or city from which they had come and organized separate communities while living on peaceful terms with other Jews. They rarely intermarried with them, nor did they unite with them in forming congregations. The Sephardim adhered to their own ritual which differed widely from the Ashkenazic.

The discovery of this hemisphere afforded new opportunities to a number of enterprising Sephardic Jews, first in South America, Mexico and the West Indies, later in the United States, which afforded them a new haven from persecution. The first Jews who settled in this country were twenty-three Sephardim who arrived from Brazil in 1654. They were followed by other Sephardic immigrants from the European continent. During the next two hundred years this

group, although numerically not very strong, grew wealthy and influential and played an important part in the building of the commerce and trade of this country. Congregations were founded in New York, Rhode Island, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina. When the influx of new blood ceased, the Sephardic community became more exposed to assimilatory influences. As strong Ashkenazic contingents of immigrants arrived in the 1840's and 1880's, the early Sephardic group became engulfed by them. Now there are but few Sephardic descendants of the early settlers.

At the beginning of this century, however, a new wave of Sephardic immigration took place mostly from the Middle East and the Balkans. This exodus to the United States was due mainly to a series of natural and man-made disasters, such as fires, earthquakes, the Balkan wars, and World War I. The exodus was also due in part to the natural desire for social and economic betterment. The new arrivals organized themselves according to their places of origin. Speaking neither English nor Yiddish, they were virtually cut off from contact with the American life in general and the larger Ashkenazic Jewish community in particular. They therefore had to turn for all their communal and spiritual needs to their own fellow-countrymen. The largest number of these newcomers settled in New York. Others organized communities in Atlanta, Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Montgomery, Portland, Rochester, San Francisco, Seattle and Washington, D. C.

It is estimated that the number of Sephardim in the United States is fifty-five thousand, of whom forty thousand live in New York City. Whereas a generation ago they were uniformly known for their low economic level, today one finds among them a substantial number who have found their way into the business and professional fields, and some who have become contractors and manufacturers mostly in the clothing industry. While at first the newly-arrived Sephardim settled in the lower East Side and later in Harlem, they are mostly found today in the Bronx and Brooklyn (particularly in the New Lots and Bensonhurst sections). Only about six hundred and fifty families are still living in the lower East Side and Williamsburg.

Sephardic Communal Organization

There are at present fifteen Sephardic mutual-aid societies in New York City, all providing burial privileges and a number of them offering additional health and aid benefits. Five of the societies have two synagogues each in different sections of the city, and three of them also maintain a Talmud Torah. Four other societies have one synagogue each but no school. In addition there are six congregations in various neighborhoods organized by Sephardim of diverse origins as well as three other independent synagogues founded by separate groups, each stemming from a different city. Some of these synagogues had religious schools attached to them but for various reasons these schools died out.

There have been, however, some Sephardim who were dissatisfied with the anarchy due to the existing division into many independent societies. These people sought to bring about a more adequate community life by uniting the societies into one organization. The first attempt in 1912 resulted in the formation of the *Federation of Oriental Jews of America,* which had as its purpose: "to create a forum where communal problems are discussed and presented to the Oriental Community for solution." The Federation set out to render important services such as Americanization,

immigration, employment, social welfare, etc., but because of internal strife and lack of interest on the part of the societies, the Federation soon became impotent.

A second major effort was made in 1924. This attempt succeeded in uniting practically all the Ladino-speaking societies into the *Sephardic Jewish Community of New York, Inc.,* whose aim was to provide for the general welfare of the Sephardic people and to perpetuate their ideals and traditions.

During the nine years of its existence, this organization strove to meet the communal needs of the Sephardic Jews by conducting a Community Center in Harlem, where a large number of Sephardim lived. This center housed a synagogue and a large Talmud Torah. It provided a youth program and various other social services. The community also maintained a Talmud Torah in the East Side, and two congregations with religious schools in the Bronx where the Sephardim had begun to settle. The depression years, however, wrought great hardships on the young organization and the fact that Sephardim began to move away from Harlem to other parts of the city made the maintenance of a center there impossible. The closing of the center in turn dealt a death blow to the entire organization.

A third attempt to bring unity and strength into Sephardic communal life was instigated in 1941 by the late Dr. Nissim J. Ovadia, who had been the Chief Rabbi of the Sephardic community of Paris until his flight from the German occupation forces. Upon his arrival in this country he exerted all his energetic leadership and brought to bear his magnetic personality to overcome the apathy of the Sephardic leaders and the resistance of the varous societies. He succeeded in drawing all the Ladino, Greek and Arabic speaking societies into one all-embracing organization: the *Central Sephardic Jewish Community of America, Inc.* Dr. Ovadia's untimely death in 1942 proved a tragic loss to the infant community, but during his brief association with the Sephardic leaders he had aroused their enthusiasm and faith and they were eager to carry on the work.

The Central Sephardic Jewish Community

The Central Sephardic Jewish Community of America (henceforth to be referred to as the *Community*) is composed of all the New York mutual-aid societies, several out-of-town Sephardic communities and individual members. The Community's constitution lists the following objectives:

1. To engage in every kind of communal activity for the benefit of the Sephardic Jews of New York City and more particularly in the following: a) Public worship in conformity with the Sephardic customs, usages and rites; b) religious education; c) immigration; d) Americanization and citizenship; e) employment; f) social welfare; g) creation and maintenance of a Jewish religious authority (*bet din*).
2. To promote the organization of groups to take charge of specific lines of communal activity, including literary, athletic, musical, social and dramatic societies, as well as organizations for the relief of the aged, the blind, the chronically ill, etc.
3. To help every individual member of the Community to avail himself of such advantages and facilities as are already available, such as hospitals, educational institutions and other civic organizations whose aim is to promote the public welfare.
4. To cooperate with other Sephardic

organizations throughout the United States, Central and South America, and other parts of the world for the general welfare of the Sephardic Jews of the world, and to perpetuate the customs and traditions of the Sephardic people.

To cooperate with other Jewish organizations in the United States and foreign countries for the general welfare of the Jewish people throughout the world.

Following the pattern of the old world pphardic Kehillah, the Community aced a chief rabbi at its head. But adually the leaders came to realize that ey also needed the services of a prossional community organizer, and in ecember, 1944, I was engaged as Exutive Director.

tivities of the Community

One of the primary tasks facing the mmunity is to improve the status of e Sephardic *Talmudé Torah*. There e altogether six such schools and a shivah, with a total student body of hundred and twenty-five (480 boys d 145 girls). Four of the *Talmudé rah* have students ranging in age from to thirteen; one from six to fifteen l the largest school (with a student dy of 270) has students from six to enteen. A number of the graduates the latter Talmud Torah pursue high- studies in various schools. The hivah, an all-day school, serves chilen from four to eight years of age.

Four of these schools and the yeshivah, in Brooklyn, belong to three societies. other school, located in the East Side, maintained by the Sisterhood of the anish and Portuguese Synagogue. The th Talmud Torah is in the Bronx and s once sponsored by an independent up. This school has lately been given over to the Community for financial and supervisory responsibility. The Community is continually striving to make religious education available to a larger number of children and to raise the educational standards. This is all the more imperative since only a comparatively small number of Sephardic parents send their children to the neighborhood *Talmudé Torah*.

The religious picture of the Sephardic community is as follows: There are five synagogues in the Bronx, seven in the East Side, eleven in Brooklyn and one in Long Beach, New York. Several of the synagogues are located in neighborhoods where the Sephardic population is dwindling, others where Sephardim have but recently settled. These synagogues are open only on Saturdays and holidays. Only a few congregations have trained rabbis; the majority have only *hazanim*. The Community, under the spiritual leadership of its Chief Rabbi, Dr. Isaac Alcalay, is working towards the stimulation and revitalization of the religious life of its people. It has thus brought about an amalgamation of the three synagogues and their respective *Talmudé Torah* in New Lots, Brooklyn, where the Sephardim are concentrated in large numbers. In spite of the fact that one of the three congregations soon withdrew, the joint effort of the two remaining ones has insured them better attended and better conducted services. In the Bronx, where each of several Sephardic societies used to hold its own High Holy Day services, the Community was able to combine them under its auspices into two synagogues and the funds thus derived are used to maintain the only Sephardic Talmud Torah in that borough.

At the present time the Community is trying to bring about an amalgamation of some of the six synagogues in the East Side and thus insure adequate daily

services and more dignified ones on Sabbaths and holidays. The Sephardic *bet din* is also in process of reorganization. Sephardic religious life does not divide itself into Orthodox, Conservative and Reform congregations. The Sephardim follow the Orthodox tenets. There is, however, evidence of lack of interest on the part of the young people in the traditional services. There is a crying need for American trained rabbis to meet the particular requirements of the American-born generation. Fortunately, several Sephardic young men are attending a well-known Orthodox seminary and this is a hopeful step toward filling this void.

With respect to social service, the Community assumes the role of interpreter and guide. The Community neither has the means nor does it deem it necessary to set up its own social service department in view of the existing adequate general and Jewish social service agencies. But it has found that it can be helpful to both clients and agencies by interpreting them to each other. Furthermore, the tragedy which has befallen our brethren abroad has given rise to several sacred obligations which the Community is fulfilling to the best of its ability. It raises funds for special overseas needs, collects clothes, religious books, etc. The Community also works in cooperation with the various overseas agencies. A most vital service in the past year has been the location of relatives both in this country and abroad. The Community has been a beacon of light to the orphaned and forlorn survivors who in many cases would not have known to whom to address their inquiries. Many overseas agencies which receive search requests from abroad turn to the Community for assistance. Advice on immigration problems is another paramount service and a heart-breaking one at that, since the quotas for some of the Balkan countries are filled for several years to come.

One of the most important problems which the Community is facing is that of its youth. Our young men and women, although born in this country, avail themselves but little of the existing recreational and cultural facilities of the general Jewish community. The reason for this may be due to the home environment which tends towards in-grown group relationship. In response to the need of giving our young people an opportunity for constructive activities, the Community embarked at the beginning of this year on a youth program. A full time professional youth director is in charge of it.

Today there are four chapters of the Sephardic Youth League: one in the Bronx, one in the East Side, and two in Brooklyn. The formation of additional chapters is being planned. In these chapters the young people meet on the basis of their general Sephardic heritage, cutting across city and country-of-origin lines of their parents. One of the great difficulties facing us is the lack of adequate building facilities. It is hoped that the three synagogue centers planned by three different Sephardic organizations will alleviate this pressing need. The leaders of these chapters are gradually being drawn into contact with representatives of various other Jewish youth groups and are active participants in the Bronx and Brooklyn Jewish Youth councils. Elected representatives of the chapters will constitute the Sephardic Youth Council, which in turn will send two representaitves to the Assembly of Delegates of the Community and to its Board of Directors.

The old age problem, acute as it generally is, assumes added intensity in the case of the Sephardic people. Even on

ing admitted to general Jewish old e Homes, they are not comfortable or isfied because of a lack of common in- est due to differences of language, cus- ms, dietary habits, etc. Aware of this ed, the Community engaged an ex- rt in the field to map out a plan how st to meet the problem of our aged ople. It is hoped that the recommenda- ns presented will be put into practice soon as feasible. The Women's Division the Community, a potent force in the e of the Sephardic community, is ready throw its full weight into this project.

orld Federation of phardic Communities

In 1944 at the time of the Emergency nference of the World Jewish Con- ss held in this country, the Commun- sponsored the formation of the World deration of Sephardic Communities th headquarters in New York. The ef aims of this organization are to ng about a more active participation Sephardic Jews in world Jewish affairs, rticularly in the establishment of a wish Commonwealth in Palestine and foster and promote Jewish religious, ucational and cultural activities among Sephardim. A temporary governing dy carries on the activities of the or- nization until such time as the first nference of world Sephardic communi- will take place.

The Community is managed by a ard of Directors elected by the As- bly of Delegates. The latter is com- ed of representatives of the constitu- member societies and of an equal mber of delegates-at-large elected by general membership. The Community upported by the affiliation dues from constituent member societies, general mbership dues and contributions. It blishes a bi-monthly English bulletin, *The Sephardi,* which is widely distributed. There is also a Ladino weekly, *La Vara,* published by an independent Sephardic publishing house.

Why a Separate Sephardic Community?

Having discussed the question, who are the Sephardim and what are the aims and activities of the Central Sephardic Jewish Community of America, I have now to approach the second question: why a separate Sephardic community? Even a brief glance at the history of the Sephardic people shows that the Sephardim tend strongly to live within their own group and do not turn to their Ashkenazic brethren for either spiritual or social support. Their different language, mores and ceremonials—in short all that constitutes their specific Sephardic heritage—prevent them from sharing intimately the community life of their fellow Jews. Only in maintaining and developing this their heritage will they live a full and fruitful life. And cultivating their particular heritage will be their greatest contribution to the wealth of the whole Jewish people. What we Jews desire—what any democratic people desires—is unity and not uniformity. The more deeply rooted the individual group, the healthier the whole of our people.

The Sephardic people, therefore, desire and need a Community of their own, need a strong and effective social structure which will satisfy their communal and spiritual needs, and will give them the opportunity for creative self-expression. But such a structure is not built overnight; it is not built without toil and sacrifice. In order that a true Community of the Sephardic people should emerge, its many component factions will have to lay aside self-interest and rivalry and concentrate on the common goal, and its leaders will have to dedicate

themselves to an active and untiring participation in the affairs of the Community.

I am confident that if and when the Sephardic community achieves inner growth and maturity, the Sephardic people will become a stronger force in the general American Jewish community.

"There Are Times"

from the Yiddish of Zalman Schneour

Translated by Amelia Levy

There is a time for the silence of sorrow—
Not for loud weeping for a people who died—
Butchered like beasts, entrapped in their lair.
Go! petrified—
To the fastnesses of your woe
And yield to the darkness of the laugh of despair.

And you my brother poets
Let your ink run dry—your pens forsake!
Raise not your voice in idle chatter
To add more din to protests.
Vanity of vanities!
Can granite yield tears?
More scarlet than blood which still is flowing
No words of yours can be!
Nor whiter than the tortured visages of mothers dragged to destruction;
Nor blacker than the smoke-clouds circling from fires
Fuelled by tender twigs—our Jewish children.
Will your voice avail?
And they who crow in freedom's name were mute,
And they who prate of charity and love were dumb.

Ascend unto the mountain
Made high by our dead.
Scorn and spurn
The promises of a brave new world
Which holds such wonder in it!
So lying tongues proclaim.
No brave new world
Without repentance from the old;
No wonders bloom
Where conscience is debased.
No scent of rose or myrtle
Can sweeten the foulness of the jackal's den
Or add a clean aroma to the stench
Of child-devouring haunts.

Ascend again

Upon the hill of death.
Spurn and scorn
The long peace-mongering procession
Of politicians, leaders, diplomats—
This long black-coated crew with white cravats;
And all the smart-attired generals
Bloated with honors like sated cannibals,
For whom the bones of our martyrs
Were a fortress of defense.

Sooner, later,
Will your scorn
And the groan of all our dead,
Like a cloud-burst fall upon them
With a rain of lead.
Brave new world of base deceivers
Lusting for the blood of men.

And you our saintly grandsires,
The Book of Lamentations close;
The Yahrzeit light extinguish.
Fall upon the ground—
The silent witness of our latest Tisha B'Av,
When temples in their thousands fell in flames,
And Warsaw, Wilna, Cracow,
Lublin and Minsk and Kovno
Were devastated like Jerusalem.

Arise!
And blow upon the Shofar
The ban of excommunication
To the four corners of this earth,
Till the sound shall stab each Jewish ear
And reverberating mingle with timeless tomorrows.

The murderer's vintage, made rich upon our ashes,
No Jewish lips shall taste;
Not for us to share his golden corn
Springing from soil by Jewish blood enriched,
Not for us his luscious fruit
Made sweet by Jewish pain;
His tongue not of our speaking,
His songs not of our singing.
Not for us his fine fabrics
Interwoven with the hair of our daughters.
No smile of ours shall ever light upon his babes
Conceived in vilest evil;
The light within their eyes is but the sparkle
Of their fathers' murderous knives.

Unclean their violence and crime;
Unclean their degradation;
Unclean their humiliation and their doom;
Unclean to the end of time shall even their repentance be.

Tekiah, Teruah, Tekiah Gedolah
Blow the Shofar loud!
Proclaim the sole revenge of a living people—
Eternality!
A people pledged to life—
Pledged to the uprooting of the evil within life.

Random Thoughts

JUST as we have gotten away from the habit of believing that art means Phidias and that philosophy means Aristotle, so must we get away from the habit of believing that religion means only the saints, prophets and sages of the past. All creative effort is art, all efficient thought is philosophy and all genuine striving to achieve what we sincerely believe to be salvation is religion. As for perfection, that not even the masters attained.

* * *

A superstitious practice formerly current among Jews was the renaming of one who was dangerously sick. It was assumed that the evil angel who was bent on taking the life of the sufferer would not recognize him under the new name and would let him go.

Jews nowadays change their names for a similar reason. They suffer from the nervous tension of being Jews. By changing their names, they expect to elude the evil spirit of anti-Semitism.

It doesn't always work, however. The anti-Semites point to this very tendency on the part of Jews to prove that Jews cannot be trusted.

Neither does it always work with the Jews themselves.

In her prize-winning psychiatric novel, "Wasteland," Jo Sinclair has the Jewish mental patient John Brown cured of a gnawing sense of futility which he brought on himself by his mental repudiation of his home environment. A sure symptom of his cure is the fact that John resumes his original name, "Jake."

I hold no brief for family names which end in "witz," "sky," and "heimer." As Americans, we should take on American family names. The Kabatchniks who are now Cabots have done nothing that is either legally or morally wrong. There is no special virtue in emphasizing our east or central-European origin.

But when it comes to our personal names, there is no earthly reason for exchanging our Avrahams, Moshes, Isaacs, Jacobs, Isaiahs for Johns, Edwards, Miltons and Matthews.

The courage to be a Jew begins with the courage to bear a personal name that is outstandingly Jewish.

When Puritans patterned their lives on the Jewish Bible, they drew on it for their personal names. We certainly should not be outdone by them in that respect, at least.

also have our post-Biblical writings
w on, when naming our children.
as been suggested that we institute
initiatory rites for young people
they become of voting age, and to
as part of those rites, the adoption
iddle name that is distinctly Jewish.
re is every moral and psychological
for taking seriously the matter of
names.

* * *

e rabbis preach as though nothing
ppened since the days of the Tal-
while others preach as though noth-
ppened before the last Sabbath.

* * *

dimmer is a contrivance by which
ht in an electric lamp can be in-
or diminished gradually instead
ing to be turned on full or ex-
ned entirely. That is the kind of
contrivance which most people
t would prevent their minds from
f the all or nothing type.

* * *

80,000 Chinese and Chinese-Amer-
n this country are known to be
law-abiding, honest and diligent.
ave a remarkable record of seldom,
having any cases of bankruptcy.
ewer in the New York *Times*,
inatown, U. S. A.," says that in
y the Italian and Jewish slums
ding Chinatown have the unusu-
h crime rates of the underprivi-
whereas the Chinese with fewer
nities, have established a fine rec-
law-abiding citizens.

if true, should shake some of us
our complacency. The American
Committee, American Jewish
s and B'nai B'rith are engaged in
ign to raise the ethical standards
eople. They utilize the expert ad-
psychologists and sociologists.
t not be a worth-while project for
these experts to make a study of the Chinese slums for the sake of discovering what it is that keeps the Chinese so well-behaved.

When one reads about the inner life of the Chinese in their own country, one comes across references to a shocking degree of corruption, exploitation and cheating as prevalent there, especially on the part of officials and business men. What happens to these same people when they come here? If the opinion about the American Chinese is not merely an idealization of the reality, there must be something in their way of life, particularly their family devotion, or perhaps in their religion, that exercises a restraining influence on their conduct. Perhaps it is the ratio of men to women, which is three-to-one, that is responsible for the unusually good behavior of the men.

Incidentally, if Jews expect that being on their good behavior will put down anti-Semitism, let them realize that all the good behavior of the Chinese here and our close relations with the Chinese Government have not made it possible for more than 105 Chinese to be admitted annually. This indicates that the American people is not overly endowed with the spirit of hospitality.

* * *

Most people imagine that to have the heart in the right place means having it anywhere but in the head.

* * *

Benzine is good for cleaning purposes. But the trouble with it is that it is inflammable and explosive. Treated chemically, however, it can be rendered harmless, and yet retain its usefulness.

Religion too is an excellent soul-cleanser, but inflammable and mightily explosive at the least provocation. Let us so treat it intellectually as to deprive it of its dangerous qualities, while taking care to preserve its cleansing properties.

M. M. K.

Book Notes

JEWS AT THE CRADLE OF ISLAM

THE MESSENGER, THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED, by R. V. C. Bodley. Doubleday, Doran, Garden City, N. Y., 1946.

THE role played by the Jews during the early days of Islam is usually overlooked or underestimated. The territory from which Mohammedanism sprang was not larger than the state of Connecticut and was sparsely populated. Only the northwestern corner of the vast Arabian peninsula was dotted with oases, villages and towns. Jews had settled there long before the birth of Mohammed, and by the time of his appearance three powerful Jewish tribes, the Bnai Kainuka, Bnai Koreiza and Bnai Nadir, ruled over vast plantations and farms, which were protected by many fortified cities. In the holy city of Yathrib, later known as Medina, the Jews formed the bulk of the population.

Mohammed found it quite easy to impress the Arab and non-Arab tribes with his revelations and to have them accept him as the true Prophet of Allah. The only people who did not seem to appreciate him were the Jews. The bitter fight waged by Mohammed against the Jews occupies substantial space in all biographies of the Moslem Prophet.

R. V. C. Bodley, in the book under review, also devotes many pages to the Jewish tribes in Arabia, but unlike other biographers of Mohammed, he has allowed his anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist prejudices to color his historical judgement.

Colonel Bodley, a British agent and a colonial official in the Middle East, lowed the example of T. E. Lawre and fled from the "decayed western ci ization" to live with bedouin Arabs. stayed with them for seven years. N Bodley is again reconciled with the W ern World and lives on his estate r New York. Like many of his colleag in the colonial service he fell in love v the Arabs and their flying robes, and f ly admits in the introduction to his b that he decided to write a biography Mohammed which would be quite un others written by "Christian bigots."

It is unfortunate that this urge fc sympathetic retouching of the life of M hammed induced Colonel Bodley to t the brutal slaughter and persecutions the Jews at the hands of the early M lems, without a shred of sympathy or derstanding. When writing about A Jewish relations in the seventh cent Bodley could not apparently restrain h self from making some quite mod anti-Semitic executions. He describes role played by the Jews in Medina notes: "In those days, as now, the J controlled many of the local banks lent money to their clients."

The explanation of the origin of Arabian Jews has little historic autl ticity, but it is tinted with a great dea malice. "A great number of peop Bodley explains, "are under the imp sion that the expulsion of the Jews f Palestine has had something to do Great Britain, or with Ibn Saud, or Adolf Hitler. Nothing could be more exact. . . . Even today 650,000 of world's fifteen million Jews are in Pa tine." The good old colonel, it see

heard of the five and one-half mil-
ews slaughtered by the Nazis.
lley's description of the virtual war
termination waged by Mohammed
st Jews is disarming in its over-
ification of the issues involved. The
orn Jews would not accept Moham-
as their long-awaited Messiah and
had the audacity to mock at his
tions, to write satirical poems about
and, above all, to prove to him by
cing the Bible that none of his proph-
were original. All reliable historians
that Mohammed hoped to win over
ws by accepting many of their laws
ractices. Thus, for instance, he com-
ed his followers to turn toward Jeru-
while praying and to fast on the
day of the month of Tishri, the
of Atonement. But Bodley cannot
he thought that the founder of Islam
is followers to bow toward Jerusa-
here the Temple of Solomon once
And he states on page 168: "Until
sagreement with the Jews, the kibla
er) was north toward Jerusalem.
was not, as it is sometimes stated,
ciliate the Jews." But obviously he
that on page 87, he had written:
he (Mohammed) could no longer
or Jewish collaboration, he allowed
lem to remain the point toward
Moslems had to turn while pray-

ley becomes ecstatic over the fact
Mohammed united his followers
is commandment to turn five times
in their prayers toward the holy
Mecca in the Arabian desert. "No
religious leader," he writes, "ever
e idea of uniting his people in such
" Is it possible that Bodley never
e passage in the prayer of Solomon
the dedication of the Temple,
says: "And hearken Thou to the
ation of Thy servant and Thy peo-
ael when they shall pray toward
this place." Does Bodley really not know that the Jews all over the world for close to 2,000 years have been turning their faces toward Jerusalem when praying?

The danger to their life and well-being that now constantly faces Jews who live in Moslem lands, and the bloody anti-Jewish riots that recently occurred in Tripolitania, Cairo and Bagdad can be better understood if one recalls the strong antipathy against Jews evinced by the Moslem Prophet.

The heroic but futile resistance offered by the Jewish tribe of Bnai Koreiza to Mohammed and his followers draws not the faintest sympathy or praise from Mr. Bodley. On the contrary, he sympathetically paints the picture of a magnanimous Mohammed who presented these terms to the besieged Jews: "No reprisals, no penalties, provided the Jews recant their faith and accept Mohammed as their leader." The Bnai Koreiza, of course, rejected this offer, but finally, after a long siege, they were forced by starvation and thirst to surrender.

Without a word of sympathy or apology. Bodley relates the inhuman slaughter of the surrendered Jews. "My judgment," said Mohammed, "is that the men shall be put to death, the women and children sold into slavery, and the spoils divided among the army." The biographer gives a lurid description of the cold-blooded mass murder. The lines read as though they were taken verbatim from a report on the Nazi murder-chambers in Maidanek and Treblinka. "At sunrise the execution began. Mohammed, surrounded by his staff, sat where he could view the massacre. Six at a time, the Jews were driven out from the enclosure where they had passed the night. Kneeling before the trench, their heads were slashed off and their bodies pushed into the waiting grave. All day long the beheading continued until the air vapored

with the stench of blood. As the sun dipped toward the west and the breeze came from the oasis, it continued. It did not stop when darkness fell. To the light of torches, the Moslem scimitars flashed and sent another Hebrew (sic!) head rolling. Finally, when the last Jew had disappeared into the trench, Mohammed went back to his quarters. He took with him a beautiful Jewess, Reihana."

If the reader expected some condemnation or even a mild reproach of the inhuman brutality displayed by a founder of a religious faith,—none is forthcoming from Bodley. Shamelessly he writes: "This wholesale destruction of the Jews is naturally a matter of contention among those who believe in Mohammed, and those who do not. All that can really be said is that, when people become fanatical over religion, they become fanatical. They like to kill those who differ with them on the matter of dogma. They usually kill en masse." If anyone still finds it difficult to comprehend the callousness of the Christian and Moslem world to the wholesale murder of millions of Jews in the death chambers of Nazism, he should read and reread the foregoing quotation. Colonel Bodley's callousness and his views should be very helpful.

Bodley's book is a poorly authenticated biography of Mohammed, but it might be helpful to prove the fallacy of the oft-repeated statement that the Jews have lived among the Moslems in peace and in dignity for many centuries but that these excellent relations have changed for the worse with the advent of Nazism. Arab leaders have only recently stressed, in their testimonies before the Anglo-American committee on Palestine, the tolerance that the Moslem rulers have shown the Jews, particularly in the Middle Ages. Their statements are not borne out by the testimonies left by the most illustrious Jews of that period. Abraham Ezra declared in his writings: "The e of Ishmael (Arab) is far harder t the exile of Edom" (Catholic). M Maimonides was forced to leave Sp because of the persecutions of the Al hadi Arabs, and in his famous "Epi to the Yemenites," he consoles the Y enite Jews, who were forced to acc Islam, and advises them to do everyth possible to emigrate from the Mos lands.

The fact that the Jews have been a to live relatively secure in Tripolita in Iraq and in Syria is easily explai by the fact that they have become th oughly assimilated into their environm In language, dress, customs and hal the Jews do not differ from the na Arab population. Outwardly, the o difference lies in the fact that they p tice the Jewish religion. At heart t have, of course, remained warm J greatly concerned with the fate of t brethren all over the world and stro imbued with love for Zion. But bec of the brutal intimidation of Arab g ernments, their feelings of solidarity w world Jewry and with the Yishuv r remain hidden in their hearts. Still, h dreds of Yemenite Jews defy the d penalty decreed by their rulers and c the borders of Yemen for the peri journey to Palestine. No one knows h many of them have been caught have paid with their lives for their lov Zion.

The bloody history of Moslem-Je relations in the Arabian peninsula ing the rise of Islam and the inhu treatment accorded to Jews by Mo med should not be overlooked whe ponder the status and the future o Jewish communities in the Arab l

Readers of Colonel Bodley's should not take this warning lightly.

MARK M.